

Best Argument Yet for Petroleum Institute

By LORENZO W. MARTIN
Mr. Martin, oil correspondent in Washington, who has had exceptional success for obtaining the viewpoint of the oil administration sends the following carefully prepared and eloquent inspired article on the Mexican situation. It is doubtless an article that does not exist but showing the argument in favor of the petroleum institute in the strong light. The following is cheerfully given:

Washington, April 20.—Of course, here who are in touch with the oil industry are unanimous in the opinion that the intelligent spirit of cooperation shown by practically all the oil men in the various branches of the petroleum business is unparalleled. Oil men of the United States, they believe, are now so far advanced so that they may successfully fight foreign invasion of the oil fields of this country, to maintain America's dominant position as a factor in the oil trade of the world, and to prevent the British government from accomplishing its alleged purpose to obtain a world monopoly of petroleum resources.

Through trade channels and through government lines of communication as well, the president has been asked to see that American petroleum interests are accorded every possible consideration by the government. He has been urged to take the necessary steps to safeguard the great interests of the United States particularly against Great Britain's campaign, which it is said, has been in operation for months. Among the suggestions that have been made to President Wilson is one he should have in consultation at Paris a number of the recognized authorities of the American oil business.

It is known that statistics and data have been prepared for use at the conference. If the president desires to know the exact position of the United States in the rest of the world as regards petroleum products and the future supply upon which the oil industry in this country has depended, officials of the geological survey, the bureau of mines and the fuel administration have prepared this vast fund of information, largely with assistance of leading representative oil men.

It is said that at least two government officials have been holding themselves in readiness to go to Paris at short notice to advise about forms that may be necessary to the protection of the American petroleum industry. They are General Mark L. Hersey, director of the oil division of the fuel administration, and Director Van H. Manning, of the bureau of mines, both of whom are adequately informed in regard to the general oil situation.

Many oil men in this country do not know that for more than six months the United States has had a trained petroleum expert in London attending and closely watching the progress of the inter-allied petroleum conference. This government representative has been keeping the oil men here well informed regarding the steps taken by Great Britain with a view to acquiring oil resources in all parts of the world, which, it is believed, indicate the purpose of the United Kingdom, not only to control the seas but also to get a world control of what promises to be the future motive power of the world—petroleum. It was recently learned in this connection, for instance, that Great Britain has among other new ships 27 Cunarders intended to hold the Atlantic supremacy, which will burn oil instead of coal.

The American petroleum industry has been pointed out to the oil industry several times recently as the agent that made it possible for the allied cause "to win to victory on land and sea." And now while awaiting any call that may come to them from President Wilson or the other American delegates at Paris, it is quite evident that the leading representatives of the oil business in the United States are fortifying themselves to offer a solid front to the war which is thought to be impending.

When the national emergency arose the petroleum industry was mobilized and gave a record of co-operation with the government that is claimed to be unequalled. At any rate it undoubtedly supplied to the American military and naval forces and to the similar forces of the allies their enormous needs for oil and its products, without which it is generally admitted that the outcome of the conflict would have been doubtful.

Now it appears that this great American industry is remobilizing this time in order to maintain its world trade leadership. To acquire foreign reserves and to make sure of its home supplies. And just as it gave its whole-hearted assistance to the country and its allies in the war against the central powers, the industry now expects the co-operation and support of its government in the trade conflict in which it is planning to engage.

For the war the petroleum industry has been agitated for years by bitter strife between the independents and the larger corporations. But when the national and international crisis arose the industry responded as a whole to the call of the country for better and more systematic production and distribution. In order to make such a thing possible it was necessary that the oil companies in the war-time functions should meet in daily conference with Oil Directors. There was organized, as the result of these meetings, the National Petroleum War Service consisting of 25 members, with Alfred C. Bedford, head of the Standard Oil company of New Jersey, as chairman.

It is now a recognized fact that the greatly disinterested service given to the country by this committee seems to be other than a agency in the industry. And this is fully agreed by government officials here in Washington, as well as by allied resolutions of appreciation. In these conferences a new spirit of co-operation for the advancement of the general interest of the industry was brought into being, and this has been reflected by representatives of this government, especially since the return of Chester Narlamore, chief of the oil division of the fuel administration, from the inter-allied maritime conference, where he has been representing the shipping board, the fuel administration and the bureau of mines. Mr. Narlamore brought back first-hand information of the trend of the international oil trade and of the ambitions of Great Britain in control thereof.

On last March 14, with the advice, encouragement, and promised sup-

port of both Mr. Hersey, the war-time oil executive, and Doctor Manning, who has been termed the federal peace-time oil interests custodian, the national Petroleum war-service committee was made a permanent peace-time organization with the purpose in mind of promoting the general development of the oil industry of the United States. It was decided to name the permanent organization the American Petroleum Institute. The work of its organization was completed in Chicago on March 27. More than 500 representatives of the industry met in this constructive session; producers, refiners, jobbers and exporters all were there.

Thomas A. O'Donnell, a self-made man, who has been engaged in the production business for more than 30 years, was elected the first president of the institute. During the war, Mr. O'Donnell held the important post of director of production of the oil division of the fuel administration.

Four things, especially, it is hoped by government officials here, will result from the organization of the American Petroleum Institute. They are:

First, the establishment of an association of national petroleum producers, executives, which will be able to bring the American oil industries into a unit world trade.

Second, an organization capable of taking charge of all petroleum products, delivered at seaboard, and superintending to their distribution throughout the world at a uniform price.

Third, that it will support the movement for a force of the best trained men in this country to be sent to foreign countries as a reserve for the American petroleum industry.

Fourth, that it will represent the oil industry in this country as scouts in this and other countries.

The next congress, it is likely, will consider legislation which will preserve for Americans the petroleum resources of this country and prevent them from being taken over by foreign capital and foreign ownership. Leaders in the American oil industry, and officials of this government who are in closest touch with its conditions, are of the firm opinion that the British government, having learned its great need for petroleum supplies as a result of its experience in the war, is now determined to obtain control of the world's petroleum resources. And for more than six months the leaders of the industry in this country have been planning to thwart any such purpose and in this effort to enlist the support of the United States government.

Recent press dispatches from London have contained the statement that "the British government is going into the oil business. And it was learned here to day, from confidential but highly reliable sources, that official dispatches to the American government would confirm this statement. The purpose of the United Kingdom, it is stated, is to develop the most powerful oil-producing, refining and transporting enterprise in the history of the industry."

Government officials here in Washington have received cable advices that Great Britain intends to make permanent the oil executive, and to co-ordinate the various petroleum administration boards and agencies. It is said that this consolidated governmental petroleum agency will act as an official adviser for all departments, including the army, and the much more important navy. And the other chief objective of the agency will undertake is that of controlling all concessions for the development of possible oil territories within the empire, as well as that of advising and assisting British companies or individuals in obtaining leases and concessions in foreign countries.

It has been no secret to well-informed oil men that the British government has for years been interested in Anglo-Persian development. The Royal Dutch group already has important holdings in the Oklahoma-Kansas-Texas, the California and the Wyoming fields.

Great Britain, it is pointed out by officials of the United States government here at present, has a military control in Russia, Egyptian, Persian and Mesopotamian fields, and elsewhere.

After entering the world war, England soon found out that it needed tremendous fuel oil supplies for its oil-burning navy. And then, with the new development of warfare, both the motor trucks and tank ambulances on land and the airplanes in the sky were found to require an increase in the demand for fuel oil. And suddenly found that modern warfare depended upon petroleum and its products—and the English didn't have the petroleum. So it was America that came to the rescue.

Now, being a maritime nation, the United Kingdom apparently has decided that she must have control of an adequate supply for the future, and this, with Great Britain is thought to be a strong monopoly.

James A. Brantley, Sand Spring, driving gear for mining machinery.

William J. Britton, Holdenville, measuring device.

Arlan Field, Aline, draft-tongue extension.

Henry W. Winter, Hennessy, hand pump.

Patents Granted.

By the Associated Press.

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